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ENLARGEMENT OF MILITARY RESERVATION OF FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEX.

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

U. S. Congress, Senate.
COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ON THE BILL

S. 5049

TO PROVIDE FOR ENLARGING THE MILITARY RESERVATION
OF FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEX.

FEBRUARY 2, 1917

Printed for the use of the Committee on Military Affairs



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1917

COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS.

UNITED STATES SENATE.

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ENLARGEMENT OF MILITARY RESERVATION OF FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEX.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1917.

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C.

The committee met at 10.30 o'clock a. m. in the room of the committee, Capitol, Senator Geo. E. Chamberlain (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Chamberlain, Thomas, Sheppard, Beckham, du Pont, Warren, and Brady.

The committee proceeded to consider the following bill (S. 5049):

A BILL To provide for enlarging the military reservation of Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of War is hereby authorized and directed to purchase such parcels of land, not exceeding one thousand five hundred acres, adjoining the military reservation of Fort Sam Houston, Texas, as may be needed for the uses of said post, considering present and future needs, and such as may be suitable for encampments, maneuvers, and field instruction of the mobile army of the United States or parts thereof; and for the purposes of this act there is hereby authorized to be expended, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$330,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Sheppard, the committee understands that you desire to have several persons called with reference to Senate bill 5049, providing for enlarging the military reservation at Fort Sam Houston, Tex. You may suggest the order in which you desire these gentlemen to appear.

Senator SHEPPARD. Mr. Chairman, I desire to say by way of introduction that the bill now before the committee was a part of a program for necessary improvements at Fort Sam Houston, which was included in two bills that I introduced during the last session of Congress—S. 5048 and 5049. The Secretary of War wrote to the chairman of this committee on April 22, 1916, urging the adoption of these bills. At the time, however, the committee found it desirable to allow us only one of the measures submitted.

I am now asking that the committee consider the other one, and I will ask Mr. Groos, the president of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, to say a few words in behalf of the bill.

Senator WARREN. Before Mr. Groos commences, I would like to ask the Senator if he has arranged to have his witnesses appear before the Committee on Appropriations, because that committee will undoubtedly take this matter up. The matter of several other posts has come up in this way. Of course I do not object to its coming up in this committee now, but as I say, it will undoubtedly come up in the Committee on Appropriations.

Senator SHEPPARD. I will say to the Senator that I will attend to that part of the matter later. I wish to have this committee have the data before it, should it consider the matter.

STATEMENT OF MR. FRANZ C. GROOS, CHAIRMAN, SAN ANTONIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, SAN ANTONIO, TEX.

Mr. GROOS. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I have the honor to come before you representing the Chamber of Commerce of San Antonio, and while we primarily come as representatives of the city of San Antonio to urge the improvement of Fort Sam Houston, I hope you will give us credit for patriotic motives in that we shall not urge anything except for the benefit of the United States Army and the country at large.

We have worked faithfully and hard in our negotiations for the purchase of the land, and in the negotiations for the leasing of the property, and in any other manner in which we could be of service to the local authorities and Gen. Funston and Col. Rogers and the rest of them, as well as your committee here, and we therefore hope we have earned your confidence and the privilege of counsel with you. We have in every instance, we think, seen to it that the United States Government gets a fair deal, and that the price for the land purchased, that we leased, and the different matters of business that might come up between the Army and citizens and the community, have in all cases been fairly dealt with as far as the Government is concerned.

I shall not go into the matter in detail myself except to testify to the fact that this piece of property which is now up for purchase is being used for, and is already a part of, the drill grounds and a part of Fort Sam Houston itself. It is now under lease with the option to purchase. Mr. L. B. Clegg, who represented the chamber of commerce in most of the negotiations with the property owners, will testify as to the values and reasonableness of the purchase, and Judge James R. Davis, county judge of San Antonio, will testify as to the value of this property from a military standpoint and as an economic measure at the present day.

I beg leave to introduce Mr. Clegg.

STATEMENT OF MR. L. B. CLEGG, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, SAN ANTONIO, TEX.

Mr. CLEGG. Mr. Chairman, this map shows the property in question. It lies between the present Fort Sam Houston and the military aviation grounds. As Mr. Groos has stated, it is now under lease by the War Department for drill grounds and is the only piece of ground they have on which to drill the troops that we have down there, all the other ground being occupied for camping purposes.

The CHAIRMAN. What rent do they pay for it now?

Mr. CLEGG. It is about 1,078 acres, and the War Department is paying \$681 and something rent per month—about 67 cents an acre. We negotiated the lease at Gen. Funston's request, and the lease was based practically on what these people were able to lease to farm tenants for. Options have been obtained on all except a piece belonging to the M. K. & T. Railway Co., which can be purchased

at what we consider and what everyone else considers to be a very fair commercial price. As a matter of fact the options will expire on June 30 of this year, and in our opinion they can not be renewed for this price. Last year we estimated that this land would cost probably \$250 per acre, and the options averaged about \$214.50, which was better than we considered at that time we could do. There are artesian wells on two tracts of this land. The Herff and Eifler tract has a 12-inch well and a pumping plant, etc., which they state cost them practically \$15,000 or \$16,000, and they are willing to turn it over at that price for use at the present time for irrigating part of the tract. On Col. Breckenridge's tract of 60 acres there are two flowing artesian wells, one of 20 inches which flows 16,000,000 gallons per day, and one 24-inch artesian well which is claimed by Col. Breckenridge to be the largest flowing artesian well in the world. It flows 25,000,000 gallons per day, and I am told by waterworks experts that the value of this well was much more than Col. Breckenridge asked for the entire tract. As a matter of fact, that is one tract on which I do not think we could get another option at the present price, which is \$50,000, \$200 per acre, and \$38,000 for improvements, which he stated would not cover the money which he had spent on it. Col. Breckenridge has retired and has spent a good deal of money for his own pleasure on it.

That, I think, Mr. Chairman, covers the ground as far as I can cover it. As I stated, the options expire on June 30 of this year and I do not think we can renew them at as reasonable rates as we have at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN. We can not get you to do like the Tacoma people did, bond your county for about \$2,000,000 and make us a present of it?

Mr. CLEGG. At the present time, Mr. Chairman, we are bonding the county for all we can for good roads.

The CHAIRMAN. Tacoma the other day offered to present the Government with a very large tract of land known as American Lake for maneuver purposes and the mobilization of a large body of troops. They feel they will be compensated for the expenditures by the presence of a large body of men.

Mr. CLEGG. We have felt that Fort Sam Houston was one of the greatest assets that San Antonio had, and for that reason the chamber of commerce has always taken the position that anything Fort Sam Houston wanted we would very gladly help them to get, and see that the Government was treated fairly in all respects, especially as to the price it should pay. Some of those people ask \$300 an acre for the land, and we have options on it for from \$200 to \$275.

The CHAIRMAN. The average price that you have options for is at the rate of \$200 an acre?

Mr. CLEGG. It averages about \$214.50, with an allowance of \$53,000 for the artesian wells and pumping plant, which is probably less than they cost.

The CHAIRMAN. That, of course, from an army standpoint, would not add any value to the land if the Government bought it. It would be for a drill ground.

Mr. CLEGG. Yes, sir; but the wells are right close to the post, and you have your own water tanks there, and the wells can be used in connection with the whole of Fort Sam Houston. This 24-inch well

furnishes enough power, running with a turbine wheel, to pump water to Col. Breckenridge's residence, pumping water up 150 feet. The well is probably about a mile and a half from the residence, and it pumps 750 gallons a minute into the tank at the residence with its own power.

The CHAIRMAN. You were heard on this proposition before, were you not?

Mr. CLEGG. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Who is your next witness?

Senator SHEPPARD. Judge Davis. I take pleasure in introducing Judge Davis.

STATEMENT OF JUDGE J. R. DAVIS, SAN ANTONIO, TEX.

The CHAIRMAN. Judge, you were heard at the last hearing, were you not?

Judge DAVIS. Yes, sir; when the two bills were up for consideration.

The only matter I desire to present to you now is the economic value of this land and the desirability of its immediate purchase. The United States Government there now has invested \$6,000,000, in what is considered the third largest post in the United States, and it now finds itself with tremendous evolutions in progress and without even a drill ground upon which to adequately drill the soldiers and maneuver them when they come there. It is not due to the short-sightedness of the Government, because the post has gradually been enlarged from time to time and has been gradually increasing in strategic value to the Government. Our former drill ground is now occupied with cantonments of the Regular Army. The Seventh Field Artillery, the Thirty-second Artillery, Signal and Medical Corps are now occupying the grounds that were formerly used for drill purposes, and those grounds are now covered with tentage. Magnificent roads have been built to accommodate the troops, field kitchens, and other necessities costing several hundred thousand dollars to take care of. This is not an emergency proposition, but a need of the Regular Establishment of the Army at that point.

When we were here before I stated that this post was originally planned by the Government as a cavalry post, and that carrying out that proposition they had established a remount station at San Antonio, Tex., and one at El Paso. Just before the mobilization of the Army—if I am correct about it—I think there were 11 regiments of Cavalry in that district. Since that time the San Antonio depot and the El Paso depot, I understand from military authorities, have handled in the neighborhood of 75,000 horses. It becomes necessary in the handling of those horses, after they are received in San Antonio and El Paso, that they have private stables and other necessities, such as medical treatment, and I believe it is a rule to have them acclimated for at least three weeks before they are allowed to go into service. You gentlemen, of course, being on the Military Affairs Committee, are perfectly familiar with all the criticisms and experiences that the Army has had, and I believe the main criticism and the main defect has been pointed out by the experts as being the utter lack—I would not say of intelligence—but the utter lack of military training of the men who come there, and the lack of experi-

ence on the part of the commanders in teaching in a school for the soldiers. The men come down there half equipped and utterly ignorant, as far as they are concerned, practically of the rules relating to the care of soldiers—the care of themselves in the matter of sanitation—and of health as well as their duties as soldiers. If Fort Sam Houston is to be considered as a cavalry post, how much more necessary will it be in the school of the soldier to have adequate facilities whereby the soldier may not only learn what is necessary to know about himself, but about the care of animals, equipment, etc., and without suitable ground for drill purposes where he may be taught daily there is no chance for him to learn.

The point may be raised that 18 miles above San Antonio there is a military reservation, but that is used for the soldier body in the movement of troops and for maneuvering purposes. It is some distance away and involves a march of from two to three days to reach that station.

Senator THOMAS. Is that north or south of the city?

Judge DAVIS. It is north of the city 18 miles. I want to bring a subject up now in case the committee should decide to discuss the measure—

Senator THOMAS. What is the acreage?

Judge DAVIS. Eighteen thousand acres. That has been used in the soldier maneuver divisions from over the United States, but it is for practical purposes, for the daily school of the soldiers, for the men who are in camp that the land covered by the bill before us is needed. For instance, under Gen. Greene, who has a division of 11,000 men—the remnants of which are there now—this entire tract was covered daily with thousands of soldiers employed in various military occupations and in the work of the school of soldiers. Any morning a person riding out there could witness a most magnificent spectacle, and yet that land that these men had to use daily for the most useful purpose in the world is only land leased by the United States Government, subject to the yearly option to buy.

The CHAIRMAN. Do they use this reservation at all during these maneuvers?

Judge DAVIS. The land we now wish to buy?

The CHAIRMAN. No; the one 18 miles from San Antonio?

Judge DAVIS. Yes, sir; they usually use that in conjunction. That was occupied all the time, but that is not adapted for this purpose here. It is timbered country, and it is for the maneuvers of artillery practically and an artillery range.

Senator BRADY. Are there any improvements on that large reservation that you speak of?

Judge DAVIS. There are a great many minor improvements in the way of wells, etc.

Senator BRADY. No; I mean a great amount of permanent improvements.

Judge DAVIS. No, sir; in fact, it was intended and bought for artillery practice and for pasturage purposes and is now being used to pasture a large number of horses that were left when the militia was being sent home. The purchase of the land now in question has been suggested by almost every commander who has been stationed at Fort Sam Houston, for necessary drill grounds; and Gen. Funston—particularly at the time we came here before, when the

necessity for quartermaster's facilities was being urged—insisted then that Senator Sheppard present to the senatorial committee the imperative necessity of ground for drill purposes for the improvement of the soldiers in order that the school of soldiers might be adequately carried out, and for that reason we think now is the proper time to buy this land, as it will never again be obtainable at the same figure. In fact, I notice in one letter where one man said his option after June 1 would be raised \$5,000.

Almost all of this land is in a high state of cultivation and subject to irrigation. Upon it are wells so magnificent in their flow that the pressure turns its own turbine. Breckenridge uses these wells for irrigation purposes under power developed by the flow of the water. It is, as was stated by Mr. Clegg, one of the most magnificent in the world, and to think that the Government can buy that land at this price.

Senator THOMAS. What is the amount required to purchase?

Judge DAVIS. Three hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

Senator THOMAS. I suppose you know that there are a great many little towns in Texas, and a great many other little towns in Colorado and other parts of the country, that demand in the aggregate \$38,000,000 for the construction of public buildings. Do you think it would be wiser to use the little money we still have in the Treasury for a purpose like this, or in the construction of these numerous buildings all over the country?

Judge DAVIS. Buildings of what sort?

Senator THOMAS. Post offices.

Judge DAVIS. If you want my judgment—of course I am not a military authority—I think that in the condition in which we are now situated, and in view of our environment with reference to other nations, when soldiers of the character and ability of Gen. Funston urge the immediate necessity for land upon which to educate soldiers, it is far preferable to post offices or other internal improvements.

Senator THOMAS. I fully agree with you; and I think, too, that the posts that we should improve and enlarge are those which are near the border where the massing of troops is primarily necessary, and where their constant presence is desirable. Your suggestion appeals very favorably to me.

Judge DAVIS. Take it from the strategic standpoint, since you raised that question. Here we are 150 miles from the border, 600 miles from El Paso, 150 miles from Brownsville, and if you have outside trouble, 240 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, with four direct lines connecting San Antonio with Galveston, and capable of the movement of any amount of troops in eight hours.

Senator THOMAS. Yes; I think the enlargement of a place for a military post like San Antonio is one of the things that justifies the expenditure of money now.

Judge DAVIS. And it calls for an urgent expenditure, because, as I stated in the beginning, here you have \$6,000,000 invested, and experience has shown you that the War Department, every time it has called for mobilization, has sent these troops to San Antonio, the logical place. In 1898, Gen. Carter with his division was sent there, and the moment this trouble arose every soldier was sent into that district.

Now, there have been, as you know, as high as 150,000 soldiers, contiguous to our territory, and supplied from San Antonio and El Paso, and I want to say further, as these gentlemen have said, that we challenge you or any real estate man, or any set of individuals to go to any one of the men who own this land and buy it at any cheaper price than the United States Government can buy it to-day.

Senator THOMAS. Of course, we all assume that the public spirited citizens of San Antonio will protect the Government. If we accept your proposition, you will protect the Government against extortion, and the exaction of undue prices for this very necessary piece of ground. That we must assume.

Judge DAVIS. Senator Chamberlain has raised the question whether we could not, by a bond issue in the county, present this land to the Government. I believe our community is as public spirited as any community in the United States, and to show you how much we have valued the presence of the military in our district, while other counties and other communities have complained about the destruction and injury of roads by reason of this vast military movement—Bexar County has yet to say a word. We have cheerfully taken care of our maintenance, and if you knew the figures into which it runs you would be surprised. Three or four or five hundred trucks in daily use do vast destruction to our roads, and we have yet to ask the Government a dollar on this account.

Senator SHEPPARD. Mr. Chairman, Gen. Bliss has very kindly consented, by permission of the Secretary of War, to come here at my request to tell us something of the need for this land, as he has been at Fort Sam Houston and knows the situation. I shall ask the committee to hear him.

STATEMENT OF GEN. T. H. BLISS, UNITED STATES ARMY.

Gen. BLISS. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, it may be of some interest in passing to call attention to the fact that the situation that the gentlemen who have been speaking to you referred to at San Antonio, is one that has confronted us at few other places.

The situation is due to the evolutions of this establishment from very small beginnings, and in the course of each evolution every step seemed to be the final one, and no particular thought was given as to what might possibly be required later on.

This station, or this establishment at San Antonio, first originated for the reason that before the days of railroads, just as now, San Antonio was and is the logical distribution point of supplies for everything along that part of the frontier of the United States. At a time, quite a number of years ago, when the railroad, I believe, reached San Antonio but no farther, all of the posts that we had along the frontier from Brownsville along the Rio Grande River well on toward El Paso, together with places like Fort Clark and old Fort Davis, and a number of others, were located there because this country was all supplied from San Antonio by wagon trains, and for that purpose the Government established a large depot and first took this piece of land which is represented on this corner of the map [indicating], for an Infantry post. They then acquired land which is not shown on the map, but very close to this, on which was located a large, heavy stone structure, locally called the "quadrangle building," after the order of a Spanish or Mexican corral on a square, and made

up of storehouses and shelter—a place from which they had to ship from time to time to these outlying stations, and the upper stories were used as office rooms or headquarters. Then a little farther on was a little tract of land which was occupied as the department headquarters of the establishment. The Infantry troops were used as guards for these wagon trains from and to Brownsville, Ringgold, McIntosh, Old Fort Duncan at Eagle Pass, and other posts such as Clark, Concho, Davis, and a number of others. These posts were all supplied by regular trips of these wagon trains from this place. Then in the early eighties, due to revolutionary conditions in Mexico that had lasted so long prior to the establishment of the Diaz régime in Mexico and were still brewing, an additional force was considered necessary down there and a battery of Field Artillery was sent to this post, which was not then named Fort Sam Houston. That caused the acquisition of additional land not shown on the map, in this direction [indicating on the map].

This post was increased still more by the addition of a Cavalry regiment, and with that the post extended from this old Infantry post around in a shape more or less like that [indicating], and was occupied by barracks, quarters and storehouses, stables, corrals, and gunsheds for these various establishments. Then, in order to acquire a very insufficient drill ground, there was finally consummated in the beginning of 1913 the acquisition of what is known as the new drill ground, which on this map would be shown in part across this area here [indicating], running down to what is known as Austin road. This direction is north and this is east. That was insufficient. It was a tract of land of a little over 200 acres and was insufficient, even with the size of the garrison that then existed. The maneuver division, so-called, was concentrated at this place [indicating] and occupied all that ground at the beginning of the revolution, which is more or less still continuous in Mexico.

At that time the citizens of San Antonio contributed money to erect a very handsome large chapel, located somewhere about here [indicating]. Additional barracks, noncommissioned officers' quarters, bakeries, etc., were established here. I think I am pointing a little too far down. It was in here [indicating]. That resulted in leaving this tract of land for which you appropriated money a year ago, injected into the military situation. Here [indicating] was the old military post and here were the Government drill grounds, etc., occupied by barracks and various other buildings, and this was occupied by a very undesirable part of the community. You gave the money to acquire that, and it is now being acquired, and also money to erect warehouses and storehouses which are very necessary by reason of the relation of that post to the railroads. There is one railroad, I think it is the M., K. & T., that owns a right of way and has a tract just east of the military reservation.

Senator SHEPPARD. Yes.

Gen. BLISS. The Southern Pacific had a terminal right in front of this quadrangle that I spoke of. Now the spurs are to be run from this railroad into this area where the storehouses will have to be erected which are necessary in connection with the existing border situation, which will doubtless continue for some time to come.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you contemplate that that will always be used as a military post for such a large body of troops?

Gen. BLISS. Not so large as there have been during this past year when we were calling out the National Guard, but in the relocation of troops which will become necessary on the withdrawal of the National Guard, which I personally think will be accomplished in the not very distant future unless something should happen on the border that is not now anticipated, the Regular Army will have to take care of that border situation for an indefinite time to come.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you always require as much land as that for the troops that you would maintain there in ordinary times of peace?

Gen. BLISS. In speaking of the situation that it is anticipated will last for some time yet, Gen. Funston, as I was going to say, in the relocation of these troops would have four mounted regiments here in addition to what they have had before, and they will occupy for an indefinite time the cantonments that were put up for the National Guard and for the small part of the Regulars that were also camped in that division.

Senator THOMAS. What is the department's recommendation regarding this, if you know?

Gen. BLISS. The Secretary of War told me I could say to the committee that he cordially approved the proposition as a very desirable thing in connection with the extension of that post.

Senator SHEPPARD. I have a letter here from the Secretary which I will, with the permission of the committee, put in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. We would like to have it. I thought probably the General would be able to answer the question.

(The letter referred to is here printed in full as follows:)

WAR DEPARTMENT.
Washington, April 22, 1916.

HON. GEORGE E. CHAMBERLAIN.

*Chairman Committee on Military Affairs,
United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR SENATOR: Senate bills, Sixty fourth Congress, first session, No. 5048, to provide adequate supply depots and terminal facilities at Fort Sam Houston, Tex., and No. 5049, to provide for enlarging the military reservation of Fort Sam Houston, Tex., would accomplish what is greatly needed at Fort Sam Houston.

This department advocates the passage of these bills. I request your favorable action on them as soon as practicable.

Very respectfully,

NEWTON D. BAKER.
Secretary of War.

Gen. BLISS. Now to complete the story of the origin of the post as it is, there was bought here, I do not know how long ago, a tract of land for a target range for this command, but very shortly after the range was established there was an injunction obtained against it on account of the danger to people who were working land in that vicinity. That is what led to the acquisition of this tract at Leon Springs of some 17,000 acres, which was obtained for a very small sum as compared with the area that was purchased, and which is used as a target range by the infantry for machine guns and for the field artillery. It is a very wild, broken, uncultivated tract of land mostly covered with timber, except where it has been cleared for this range purpose. It is very rocky and can not be cultivated at all for agricultural purposes, nor could it be used for building or drilling purposes. I thought it was about 25 miles by road from the post, but these gentlemen say 18. It is used solely for large maneuver-

ing and target range purposes, and will provide for the training of that kind of a large body of men.

Senator BRADY. It is not adapted for any other purpose?

Gen. BLISS. No, sir; it is not adapted for any other purpose. When I was in the command we had troops march in turn all the way from Brownsville to all the stations along the river. When their practice season began, if there was nothing to require their presence on the river, the organizations would march from Brownsville, taking about 18 days to march for the artillery. They would go and camp at Leon Springs and go into practice. It is so large that by no possibility could you fire a shot off the reservation, and therefore it is perfectly safe.

Now as to the acquisition of this land, which these gentlemen have described to you in detail, it will just extend to the old target range. The old target range, by the way, is used in part for aviation training. The War Department is engaged now in securing, as rapidly as the material can be provided, three aero squadrons, at least one of which will be permanently kept there and the others distributed throughout the country where they are needed. It is an excellent location by reason of its climatic conditions.

Senator THOMAS. Have you any large body of water near San Antonio?

Gen. BLISS. The largest body of water that I know of is a river—the San Antonio River which rises in one of these springs that are common in that country, I think within the city limits of San Antonio.

Senator THOMAS. I had reference to a lake or a large body of water rather than a small river.

Gen. BLISS. Mitchell Lake is about 12 miles, but that is really a cesspool. The sewage, I think, of part of the city goes into that. There is also Lake Medina, which is an artificial lake.

Senator THOMAS. Admiral Peary told me some time ago that a comparatively small body of water in the vicinity of an aviation military school would be amply sufficient to permit of hydroelectric training as well as military training, which is the basis of my inquiry.

Gen. BLISS. I think there are two there for that purpose, but as to flowing streams, I think probably Salado Creek, with the addition it gets from this artesian well, is as large a body of water as there is in the immediate vicinity of San Antonio, with the exception of the San Antonio River.

This land is cultivated. It is more or less rolling, and some part of it is pretty rough and covered—or was until Gen. Funston got authority to lease it a few months ago—with mesquite—and I think he has cleared an amount of that off.

Now, that will give any garrison that would be liable to be kept there under peace conditions, ample ground for the kind of instruction we now do, and give instruction in trench digging, and of course with mounted troops. They have to have their horses and hurdles and ditches and obstructions of all kinds, and the land is also favorably adapted for drilling of Infantry.

The CHAIRMAN. You think it is essential that the Government should own it?

Gen. BLISS. I think it is most desirable.

Senator SHEPARD. That is all, Mr. Chairman. I have here a letter from the Secretary of War and a statement from Gen. Funston that I would like to put in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. They will be inserted.

(The letter and statement referred to are here printed in full, as follows:)

JANUARY 25, 1917.

From: Commanding General.

To: The Adjutant General of the Army.

Subject: Additional land for Fort Sam Houston Reservation.

1. Referring to my telegram, No. 2768, of September 6, 1916 (copy herewith), and to your reply, No. 3796, September 14, 1916 (copy herewith), the following is submitted.

2. Leases have been made, as shown below, for the land in question. Options for the purchase of this land have been granted by the lessors, the term of such option purchase expiring with the term of the lease, including the renewal provisions. An accurate survey of all of this land has been made and the areas are shown in letter of the Department Engineer herewith, also in the following statement. Copy of each lease is also inclosed.

Name of lessor.	Acreage as leased.	Monthly rental.	Actual acreage as surveyed.	Option price per acre.	Total purchase price.
P. A. Ward.....	116	\$100.00	103.59	(1)	\$21,018.00
Harry Landa.....	239	100.00	240.49	\$225.00	54,110.25
H. Eisenhauer.....	135	100.00	225.79	225.00	50,802.75
Geo. W. Brackenridge.....	60	60.00	60.68	² 50,000.00
Herff & Eiffler.....	280	218.00	277.61	³ 70,000.00
P. A. Vance.....	172.16	103.20	170.32	225.00	38,322.00
Total.....	1,002.16	681.20	1,078.48	284,253.00

¹ \$200 for 91.59; \$225 for 12.

² \$50,000 for entire tract.

³ \$70,000 if purchased before June 30, 1917; if purchased between July 1, 1917, and June 30, 1918, \$75,000.

3. The following information relative to wells on this land is furnished by the owners:

On the Brackenridge tract there are two large artesian wells and on the Herff and Eiffler tract one large artesian well, all of which are capable of furnishing large quantities of pure, potable water. The well on the Herff and Eiffler tract is approximately 730 feet in depth, of 12 inch diameter, with a flow of approximately 2,500,000 gallons per day. Of the two wells on the Brackenridge tract, one is 24 inches in diameter, depth about 633 feet, daily flow approximately 25,000,000 gallons; the other, 20 inches diameter, daily flow approximately 16,000,000 gallons. These two wells have developed a force equivalent to 52 horsepower. They are connected with two Goulds triplex plunger pumps, installed in a two-story reinforced concrete pump house. The pumps are manipulated by water turbine in connection with the two wells; they deliver water to an elevation of 150 feet above the plant. The output at this point, 150 feet above the location of the plant, is estimated at 750 gallons per minute.

4. In addition to the foregoing, the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway Co. owns a tract of land consisting of 102.36 acres, adjoining the land already leased and hereinbefore described. In order to properly complete and round out the reservation, it is considered desirable to acquire this railroad land. Copy of letter from Mr. W. A. Webb, chief operating officer of the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway, regarding this tract is inclosed herewith. It is self-explanatory. This tract would probably cost from \$35,000 to \$40,000.

5. As already stated in previous correspondence, the purchase of all of this land is considered to be imperatively necessary in order to provide sufficient drill and maneuver grounds for troops stationed at this post, and in order to cover the purchase of the leased land on which options have been granted, as above stated, and also the land of the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway Co., for the required purposes. I request and urgently recommend that the matter be presented to Congress at its present session, with recommendation by the War Department that necessary legislation be enacted authorizing the purchase of said land at a cost of \$330,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary. It is recommended that this matter be presented before Congress at the earliest possible moment in order that the necessary legislative authority for the purchase may be obtained during the present session.

6. Three copies of plat showing the several parcels of land comprised in this proposition are mailed under separate cover this date.

FREDERICK FUNSTON,
Major General Commanding.

UNITED STATES SENATE, *June 16, 1916.*

MY DEAR SENATOR CHAMBERLAIN: Please file the inclosed letter from the Secretary of War to Hon. James Hay in reference to the bills (S. 5048 and S. 5049) for additional facilities and additional land at Fort Sam Houston, with the papers relating to these bills, and oblige,

Yours, very truly,

MORRIS SHEPPARD.

Senator GEORGE E. CHAMBERLAIN,
Washington, D. C.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, June 9, 1916.

Hon. JAMES HAY,

*Chairman Committee on Military Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. HAY: 1. With reference to your letter of May 29, 1916, regarding the extent to which it is absolutely necessary to increase the supply depots and terminal facilities at Fort Sam Houston, Tex., and what reason there is for enlarging the military reservation at that post, you are informed as follows:

2. The needs for additional storage facilities and additional facilities for handling property are now urgently felt at Fort Sam Houston, Tex. The present depot there was built when the Army consisted of only 25,000 men, and only a very small part of it was supplied from that point. As the Army has grown and as the number of troops in the Southern Department has increased, the demands made upon the depot have also increased, whereas the facilities at that point have remained almost stationary. The result is there is now much duplication of labor, loss of time in handling supplies, and scattering supplies in Government storehouses and in storehouses rented in various parts of the city of San Antonio.

Due to present inadequate storage accommodation, under the emergency which recently arose along the Mexican border, it has been necessary to have large quantities of supplies sent by special trains from northern and eastern depots, resulting in loss of time and increased cost to the Government. The existing arrangements for receiving and distributing supplies at Fort Sam Houston are inadequate and expensive. Additional land should be purchased in suitable places for modern storehouses, depot buildings, offices, shops, corrals, etc., and double-switch track connections with the main line of the G. H. & S. A. R. R. and double switch connection with the main line of the M. K. & T. Ry. should be provided in order that the Government may have the valuable benefit of access to these two lines of railroad, both for ordinary business and for emergency purposes, when prompt movement of large bodies of troops and the quick shipment of trainloads of supplies become necessary. The general supply depot at San Antonio should include proper depot facilities for the Quartermaster Corps, Medical Department, Corps of Engineers, and Signal Corps. The Ordnance Department will have sufficient facilities in San Antonio Arsenal and in the storehouses that now exist at Fort Sam Houston. Increase in the supply depots and terminal facilities above indicated is, therefore, absolutely necessary for economy and military efficiency.

3. The post of Fort Sam Houston is peculiarly well located not only as a supply point, but also as a station for the Regular Army and as a training place for citizen soldiers. The reservation as it exists to-day is too small for the present garrison to have reasonable facilities for drilling. The land which it is proposed to add to the reservation can be secured now at a reasonable figure, as it has not yet been incorporated within the limits of the city of San Antonio. It is contiguous to the present reservation, and well located and well adapted for the purposes for which it is contemplated to use it.

4. It has been learned from the commanding general, Southern Department, that the amounts provided for in Senate bills Nos. 5048 and 5049, Sixty-fourth Congress, first session, are considered reasonable.

Very truly, yours,

NEWTON D. BAKER,
Secretary of War.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will now adjourn.

(Accordingly, at 11.45 o'clock a. m., the committee adjourned, subject to the call of the chairman.)





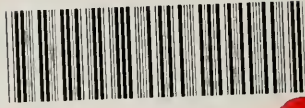
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